

HORST BUCHHOLZ: FROM REFUGEE TO RICHES

By PEER J. OPPENHEIMER



Wife Myriam and Horst, here with son Chris, met while working in a German-Italian film. Horst made his U.S. debut in "The Magnificent Seven."



THE VOICE on the other end of the line was unmistakably that of a British gentleman's gentleman: "Mr. Buchholz will have his chauffeur pick you up at 6:30, Sir. He would like you to have drinks with him at his flat and then dinner at Cunningham's."

Two hours later, a \$30,000 Rolls-Royce whisked me through London to Horst Buchholz' town house. There I was introduced to several members of England's nobility, who had stopped by for a drink.

Horst was in London for his starring part in the 20th Century-Fox film, "Nine Hours to Rama." But had he been in Paris, he could have lived equally well, for he keeps an exquisitely furnished apartment in the most fashionable section of that city. And if the film's location had been California or Switzerland, he would have been able to live in the huge houses he maintains in those places.

Yet I doubt if Horst is even conscious of the energy he devotes to creating a way of life that outdoes even the Hollywood standards of the extravagant 1930s. He is not a show-off; his manner is friendly, unaffected, sincere. This apparent contradiction can only be explained by taking into account his tension-filled, hand-to-mouth childhood in war-torn Europe.

Horst was born in Berlin 29 years ago. During World War II, his family was bombed out of its home, and Horst was evacuated to the first of a series of children's camps.

Riding in a cattle car as he fled the advancing Russians, Horst survived a bombardment that destroyed the train, and he spent the entire summer of 1945 walking home to Berlin while dodging the still trigger-happy Russian patrols. He existed on begged and stolen food.

He remembers that period of his life with little outward show of bitterness:

"My father was captured by the Russians and was not released until three

Horst, who earns some \$100,000 a movie now, plays Gandhi's assassin in new film, "Nine Hours to Rama."